(b) if so, the details of border areas where this link is proposed to be provided;

(c) the total estimated cost of establishing the telecommunication links; and

(d) by when the project would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Government has no specific scheme to establish telecommunication links for better border management, particularly 1040 km. long Indo-Pak border, in Rajasthan.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Congestion in mobile telephony

294. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that BSNL's not offering sufficient Points of Interconnect (PoIs) to private mobile operators leading to high level of congestion and poor quality service for mobile telephones across India;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take any action to resolve the problem; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Congestion in the mobile telephony happens due to the problems within the network of the private mobile operators in addition to shortage of capacity at the points of interconnection among networks of telecom service providers including BSNL. Congestion is one of the reasons for poor quality of service from mobile phones. BSNL provides interconnection based on technical feasibility and as per the time frame provided in the interconnection agreement between BSNL and Private Operators.

(b) and (c) Interconnection provisioning is a continuous process. The Government has asked Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and the private

telecom operators to take various steps which *inter alia* include holding of regular review meetings, streamlining of the procedure for provisioning of PoIs in time bound manner, to provide forecast for demand of PoIs in advance to enable BSNL to plan necessary equipment where feasible so as to reduce the cases of technical non-feasible.

Withdrawal of service tax

295. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to withdraw service tax imposed on postal services since this will lessen the burden of crores of families who survive on remittances sent by working children through money order;

(b) if so, by when Government are expected to act positively for the benefit of crores of families; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) Circular No. 83/1/2006 dated 4th July, 2006 has been issued by Ministry of Finance clarifying that services such as money orders, Postal orders and Operation of Savings Bank Accounts provided by Department of Posts are not leviable to Service Tax under Banking and other Financial Services defined under Section 65(105) (cm) read with section 65(12) of Finance Act, 1994.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Effect of service tax on money order and speed post

296.SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that service tax on certain postal services has been introduced;